DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 158 632 HE 010 266

AUTHOR Andrews, Grover J.
TITLE Nontraditional Education: The Quality Issue and Military Base Education.
PUB DATE 11 Apr 78
NOTE 12p.; NAIMES Conference, National University Extension Association Annual Meeting (April 11, 1978)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Armed Forces; Case Studies; College Role; *Delivery Systems; Educational Accountability; *Educational Assessment; *Evaluation Criteria; *Extension Education; External Degree Programs; Higher Education; Interagency Coordination; Interinstitutional Cooperation; *Military Personnel; Nontraditional Students; Program Evaluation; Surveys

ABSTRACT

Postsecondary education programs at military installations have been offered jointly by the military and higher education institutions to meet the needs of the on-duty serviceman. Undergraduate and graduate courses are designed to contribute to skills in the military occupation, develop skills for a second career, and provide personal enrichment. In-depth case studies of the quality of these programs will be conducted in 1978 in order to holistically assess the programs and evaluate the effectiveness of delivery of educational programs by civilian schools to military bases. The current roles of the schools, military, the states, accrediting commissions, and other organizations will be identified, and elements of an on-going system of quality control will be determined. Information will be gathered from selected military educational programs on need assessments, purpose and objectives, implementation and evaluation procedures, administration organization, faculty, and curriculum. Evaluation criteria for on-site visits to military bases and a schedule of the activities of the advisory committee for the study are presented. (SW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

HE

-ED158632

NONTRADITIONAL EDUCATION: THE QUALITY ISSUE AND MILITARY BASE EDUCATION

The past decade has seen the development of many new and unconventional methods of delivering postsecondary education to large numbers of the U.S. population who were not previously served by the more traditional forms of postsecondary education offered by the traditional institutions. Basically the new systems for delivery of education have come from two sources, (1) from within the traditional institution and (2) from newly created nontraditional institutions. With the rapid development of what has come to be called "nontraditional education" an increasing concern over the "quality" of such programs has also arisen.

Though its history predates the current nontraditional educational movement, postsecondary education offered by certain institutions on military installations is today placed under the rubric of nontraditional education by many individuals agencies, and institutions because of its off-campus nature. The quality of postsecondary educational programs offered on military installations has become a growing issue over the past two years.

While the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation Project on Nontraditional Education which began April 1, 1977 and will conclude in October, 1978 is addressing all aspects of the movement, I will focus my remarks toward the issue of most concern to those of you present here today, "The Quality Issue and Military Base Education."

An outgrowth of the national concern over off-campus educational activities of postsecondary institutions and the work of the COPA study of non-

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Steven Andrews

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

HE010 296

traditional education is the proposal for A Case Study of Off-Campus Post-Secondary Education on Military Bases to be conducted by COPA and the six regional accrediting associations for the Department of Defense.

INTRODUCTION--Background and Rationale for the Case Study

The increasing desire of the United States military services to provide educational opportunities for their personnel has been met in recent years by a corresponding willingness on the part of civilian postsecondary educational institutions to extend their programs to military installations on the local, national, and international level. Recognizing the obvious need for programs of this type, regional accrediting commissions have encouraged institutions to cooperate with military services in designing appropriate undergraduate and graduate courses. It is assumed that educational needs and purposes may vary considerably from base to base. Courses may provide educational experiences which: (1) contribute to increased effectiveness in a present or future military occupation, (2) provide skills for a second career, and (3) are primarily for personal enrichment. In the process of meeting these varying needs institutions have modified considerably the traditional concept of campus residence, the physical setting, and the usual methods of credit accumulation in order to develop programs which serve the nontraditional student: the on-duty serviceman. Those courses designed for the student on a college campus may not be appropriate for military personnel in terms of their past experience and present and future needs.

The availability of these educational opportunities has become a major recruitment tool of the military services and if some projections of manpower needs for volunteers are met, perhaps as many as one-third of this country's

high school graduates may receive their first exposure to postsecondary education while in the military. Some military bases have already become major educational centers both in terms of range of programs, numbers of students, and variety and number of postsecondary institutions involved. In some instances up to ten institutions have provided courses on a single base.

The responsibility for programs on military bases rests both with appropriate military officers and with the institution. It is recognized that there must be mutual understanding as to the objectives and needs of the military authorities as they relate to those of the institution providing educational experiences. Both of the parties to this educational endeavor are also concerned with program quality, as are accrediting commissions and the Veterans Administration, which estimates that about 250,000 military personnel on active duty currently use their VA benefits before discharge.

It has been assumed that regionally accredited institutions were offering quality programs on military bases, but in recent years some military personnel, students, educators, and the regional accrediting commissions themselves have expressed concern as to whether the quality and effectiveness of base programs has been adequately evaluated, especially since the expansion of some programs to locations thousands of miles from the parent institution. Military commanders, for their part, have a difficult task determining the holistic value of programs because of the present piecemeal evaluation of individual programs by accrediting agencies and the lapse of time before all programs are evaluated. Furthermore, program approval by state agencies has been uneven due to the geographical extent of the operations and because the programs are provided on federal

installations. Contributing also to the problem of putting base programs in perspective is the decentralized nature of military education which usually leaves program development primarily to base authorities. Base commanders, education officers, and the Department of Defense find it difficult to compare their programs, except in numbers of students and courses, with those of other bases having similar characteristics.

In short, these developments have made imperative an in-depth study of the quality of postsecondary education programs at all levels on military bases which offer a variety of programs involving a significant number of institutions. This case study is vitally needed to provide a total picture of the state of the art at one point in time and to formulate recommendations which will enable the military, the institutions, and the accrediting agencies to re-examine present procedures and to plan for improvements in policy.

THE CASE STUDY APPROACH

Purposes, Goals, Objectives

Basic Assumptions

A. Military personnel are entitled to postsecondary educational opportunities during their tour of duty for: (1) personal development, (2) to improve their opportunities while in military service and (3) to prepare for a future career upon return to civilian life.

B. On-base non-military educational programs can best be offered by the accredited civilian postsecondary educational institutions.

C. The responsibility for the quality of postsecondary educational programs offered by civilian institutions on military bases is shared by the institution, the military, and the accrediting commissions.

The Case Study Method

The Case Study Method is proposed in order to achieve the various goals developed for the project. These goals and purposes are as follows:

A. To make a holistic assessment of postsecondary educational programs offered by accredited institutions on military bases.

B. To make an evaluation of the effectiveness of civilian postsecondary educational institutions in the delivery of educational programs for personnel on military bases.

C. To identify the current roles of: (1) postsecondary institutions, (2) military organizations and personnel, (3) the states, (4) accrediting commissions, and (5) other involved organizations or agencies in the provision of on-base postsecondary educational programs by civilian institutions.

D. To identify the functions essential for an on-going system of quality control in on-base postsecondary educational programs provided by civilian institutions.

E. To make recommendations concerning: (1) the proper roles to be performed by each of the participating organizations identified in B. above, and (2) the functions essential to maintaining an on-going system of quality control for on-base postsecondary educational programs provided by civilian institutions.

F. To provide a reservoir of data about postsecondary educational programs provided for military bases by civilian institutions for use by the military (base commanders, educational service officers, and Department of Defense personnel), institutional personnel, and accrediting commissions in the development of appropriate policies and procedures for such programs.

Case Study Prospectus

The respective military bases selected to participate in the case study will be expected to complete a comprehensive case study report which will include descriptive information and analysis of:

A. The total postsecondary educational program of the base including need assessments, purpose and objectives, and procedures currently used to implement and evaluate the program.

B. A description by each institution of its educational programs offered on the base, to include administrative organization, curriculum, advanced placement policy and procedures, faculty and other personnel, evaluation systems, and quality control systems employed on-base at the parent institution.

The Plan

Working under the direction of an advisory committee composed of the executive officers of the nine regional accrediting commissions, a COPA representative, and a Department of Defense representative, a Case Study of Off-Campus Postsecondary Education on Military Bases will be conducted during 1978 to determine the effectiveness of postsecondary institutions in providing educational programs on military installations.

Ten bases representative of the various branches of the military will be selected which provide a variety of institutions and education programs for use in the case study. A Case Study Report will be prepared for each base included in the study. The accrediting commission(s) operating in the geographical location of the base will have primary responsibility for the on-site visit for the evaluation of the postsecondary educational program of the military installation.

The complete report of the Visiting Committee will be transmitted to the Base Commander, each participating institution, the appropriate accrediting commission, the respective branch of the military, the Department of Defense, and other appropriate and involved agencies such as the Veterans Administration and the state higher education administration for information and individual agency use. The advisory committee for the project will receive all reports and will issue a single evaluation report for the project to include appropriate recommendations at the national level concerning postsecondary education on military installations.

1. Postsecondary Educational Institutions

Each postsecondary education institution currently operating on one of the military installations participating in the Case Study of Off-Campus Postsecondary Education on Military Bases will be expected to prepare a report that will include an inventory of current educational programs, administrative organization, curriculum, advanced placement policy and procedures, faculty and other personnel, evaluation systems, and quality control systems on base and at the parent institution.

2. Accrediting Commission

The accrediting commission(s) responsible for the region in which the military installation is located will have primary responsibility for the organization and conduct of the on-site committee visit for the evaluation of the postsecondary education program. All visits will be directed and coordinated by the advisory committee for the Case Study.

A. Visiting Committee Structure. Each Visiting Committee should consist of at least the following personnel, most of whom should have had experience with military education:

Chairman (1)
Financial Officer (1)
Program Specialists (2 or 3)
Commission staff (1)
Observers:
DOD
Military Service
Education Service Officer (local and/or visiting officer from another base or another military branch)
State
VA

In making the on-site visit the committee should use the following evaluation criteria:

General

1. The extent of the coincidence of base purposes and objectives with those of the institutions which provide educational experiences.
2. Characteristics of students and modifications in admissions requirements, course content, and course procedures to accommodate these characteristics.

Input Criteria

1. Administration

   A. How are institutions selected for on-base programs? How often do senior administrators from the parent institution visit the base? How is the program administered in relationship to the home institution? What are the responsibilities of institutional authorities vis a vis military authorities? Who determines financial arrangements?

   B. Who makes decisions on academic matters?

   C. How are need priorities determined by military authorities? Are course selections compatible with the overall objectives of the base program and with those of the parent institution? How are decisions made regarding assignment of programs to the various institutions?

   D. Are student services coordinated to avoid duplication and to effect economics?

E. Have the regional accrediting associations been informed of new base programs by the institutions involved? How long has it been since the last evaluation? (on base)

2. Academic Program

A. What are the academic and experiential qualifications of the faculty? What is the extent of the employment of adjunct instructors? Are there procedures for the monitoring of faculty performance?

B. Is there faculty input into academic matters on military installations? Student input?

C. Are there stated policies in regard to admissions policies? Do they vary from those of the parent institution?

D. Is curriculum consistent with program objectives? What is the extent of non-credit offerings?

E. Are there stated policies in regard to what is expected of students? Do students have the opportunity to evaluate their educational experiences?

F. What learning resources are available--library, audio-visual etc. In what ways do they support the learning objectives of programs?

G. What physical facilities in terms of classrooms and laboratories are available? Are they adequate to support the programs offered?

H. What are the procedures for record keeping of student files?

Output Criteria

1. Are there formal procedures for evaluating the student outcomes of courses and programs in terms of stated objectives?

2. Are there provisions for recording the post-program attainments of graduates? Are the procedures similar to those employed at the home campus of the institution?

3. How much and what types of military education is accepted for credit toward degree programs? Are credits earned on base accepted by other institutions?

The Visiting Committee will make an evaluation of the total postsecondary education program at the base with appropriate recommendations for the program as a whole as well as for the individual institutions and administrative units, both military and civilian.

C. Final Report. Before the committee leaves the base, the chairman should obtain a rough draft of his or her part of the written report from each member of the committee. The chairman will prepare the final written report by editing the various parts to achieve a consistency of presentation into a single report. The advisory committee for the Case Study, through its chairman, will review the report and will send copies to all appropriate parties.

The Visiting Committee will give an oral report of their findings to the Base Commander, the Educational Services Officer, institutional representatives, and others appropriate prior to their exit from the military installation.

3. Schedule

April, 1978.

The advisory committee, working with the appropriate military personnel, will select the military installations to be included in the Case Study.

May - July, 1978.

The Educational Services Officer (ESO) of each military installation included in the Case Study will be responsible for the coordination and preparation of the Case Study Report. A Commission staff member designated by the chairman of the advisory committee will make an on-site preliminary visit to the base early in the preparation phase of the report to advise with the ESO and the various institutional representatives on the base.

August - November, 1978.

The Visiting Committees will make the on-site evaluations between August and November, 1978 on a schedule of dates appropriate to the individual military installations.

December, 1978.

The advisory committee for the Case Study will review all of the individual base reports and will prepare and present a final comprehensive report on the total Case Study of Post-secondary Education on Military Bases. The final report will include a summary of findings and conclusions with appropriate recommendations for the institutions, the military, and the accrediting commissions for the improvement of the effectiveness of the delivery of quality postsecondary education to military personnel on military installations.

Conclusion

I wish to conclude with two observations: one concerning quality and one concerning the overall COPA project.

Quality - quality relates to a degree of excellence and in education refers specifically to those peculiar and essential characteristics that are inherent to excellence. Essential to the assurance of excellence is a system of quality control. Quality control is an aggregate of functions designed to insure excellence (continuous study, analysis and correction to conform to standards.) Quality control in postsecondary education on military installations is a shared responsibility among the institutions, the professions, the military and the accrediting commissions.

The COPA Study - the findings of the COPA project on Nontraditional Education appears to be focusing on a need for performance-output standards to assess the performance of graduates rather than direct concern for process-input standards. Such an emphasis, if implemented, will have significant implication for institutions, faculty, students and accrediting commissions in the future. It would mean a change in the basic conceptual framework for postsecondary education.

Grover J. Andrews, SACS
NAIMES Conference-NUEA Annual Meeting
April 11, 1978